challenges for airport infrastructure and airspace management, specially at-busy airport such as New Delhi and Mumbai;

(c) The infrastructure at airports is being upgraded by strengthening and extending the runways, apron for more parking of aircraft, parallel taxi track and rapid exit taxi tracks to improve upon runway occupancy. The capacities of Terminal Buildings are also being expanded by construction of new Terminal Buildings with modular design and modifying/ expanding existing terminals.

Dedicated Airports Express Rail Link in Hyderabad

489. SHR1 NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

the largest status of the proposal of Andhra Pradesh Government to develop a Dedicated Airport Express Rail Link (DAERL) from existing Begumpet Airport to the new Rajeev Gandhi International Airport; and

the time likely to be taken to accord approval for leasing land at the existing Begumpet Airport for DAERL on long term basis and for implementing the DAERL project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) A proposal has been received from Andhra Pradesh Government and it is under examination.

Fuel surcharge imposed by private airlines

490. SHRIMATI N.P. DURG A: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that the public sector oil companies have reduced the price of Air Tubine Fuel (ATF) by 4 per cent in the last week of December, 2007;

if so, whether it is also a fact that the fuel surcharge on tickets has not been reduced by the airlines;

whether private airlines are cheating the passengers by overcharging from passengers and the 4 per cent reduction on ATF is going into their kitty; and

if so, whether Government would issue strict instructions to private players to reduce fuel surcharge on tickets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Price of ATF was reduced by about 4% in the month of Dec, 2007.

(b) to (d) The Government is not regulating fares of the Airlines. Domestic airlines are free to charge air fares as per the market forces.

Air services from Visakhapatnam during night

491. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVILAVIATION be pleased to state:

whether his Ministry has expedited the process for operating the air services from the Visakhapatnam Airport during night time;

whether his Ministry is facing any shortage of skilled and technical manpower to operate the services during night time from the existing airport at Visakhapatnam;

the reasons in delay for not operating the services during the night time; and

(d) if so, by when both the domestic and international services are likely to be make available during night time from Visakhapatnam Airport?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Provision of Night Landing Facilities and other essential Visual and Navigation Aids, Solar Powered Obstructions Lights on identified hills, DVOR and Instrument Landing System at Visakhapatnam has been completed so as to permit night operations of aircraft at Visakhapatnam Airport. ATC services at this airport are operated by the Indian Navy and the technical manpower for airport operations is required to be provided by Navy as per their requirements.

(c) and (d) Directorate General of Civil Aviation has conveyed no objection for operationalsation of night landing facilities on 22.2.2008 subject to certain conditions.

Delay in delivery of aircrafts by Boeing

492**. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION** bepleasedtostate:

whether it is a fact that Air India has purchased Boeing 777-200 LR and Boeing 777-300 ERs from Boeing company;

if so, the details of the delivery schedules;

whether it is also a fact that the Boeing company is not delivering the aircrafts as per schedule; and

if so, the reasons for the delays of delivering of the aircrafts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) The erstwhile Air India had placed an order for 8 B777-200LR and 15 B777-300ER aircraft from Boeing company. Two B777-200 LR have been received in July, 2007 and one each in August, 2007, December, 2007 and February, 2008. Two, B 777-300 ERs have been received in October, 2007 and one in December, 2007.

(c) and (d) There have been some delay in the delivery schedule of the initial batch of aircraft due to an inplant strike in Boeing and delay in the seat programme schedule.

Closure of Begumpet Airport

493. **SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION** be pleased to state:

whether the Begumpet Airport, the 6th largest airport in India would be closed once the Shamsabad Airport comes into operation;

if so, whether it is prudent to close an airport which has shown growth of 39 per cent in traffic revenue collections in the first 8 months of this year;

whether the Begumpet Airport would be kept operational for domestic traveller keeping the popular public demand in view; and

if not, the reasons therefor?

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THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (d) In terms of the Concession Agreement signed between Government of